

support increased funding for research, development and greater consumer use of renewable energy. Over the last 7 years the Federal government has invested some \$2.2 billion in renewable energy. I also remain a steadfast supporter of fusion energy research, much of which is conducted in New Jersey at Princeton University. Fusion energy has the potential to become an unlimited, safe, environmentally friendly, affordable energy source. I appreciate the budget support, some \$240 million this year for continued research, from the President and Secretary of Energy, Spencer Abraham.

As a nation, we want the lights to come on whenever we flip the switch. We expect our computers to run and the air conditioning to work. Fortunately for New Jerseyans, unlike our fellow Americans in California, our power still flows—the lights come on, the computer runs and the air conditioning works. This is in large part due to the fact that most of New Jersey's electric power is generated by nuclear energy—75 percent of our electricity comes to us thanks to nuclear power. Nuclear energy has come a long way. It's proven to be safe, stable and reliable. But much of our nation does not have the benefit of such an abundant, reliable source of energy and that's exactly why we need a comprehensive national energy plan. As a nation, we cannot afford any more "California" crises.

The bottom line is America must be energy self-sufficient. Currently, our nation imports over 55% of the oil we consume from foreign oil cartels. This must change. When more than half of our energy needs comes from foreign sources, particularly OPEC, that alone is a security risk. We need more American oil, more American gas, and more use of American clean-coal technology, to name just a few. This is the only way to guarantee an uninterrupted supply of energy when we need it. But this drive to produce more energy domestically does not mean that energy development and environmental priorities cannot co-exist. They must. There must be a balance between energy development and the protection of our environment. For the record, when I say balance is needed, I mean drilling in the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge, or off the coasts of New Jersey or Florida are not options.

Obviously energy has enormous implications for large and small businesses, homeowners, our economy, environment, and our national security. Under the President's leadership, I am confident that we will better manage America's energy problems. It won't be easy and there will be many disagreements. No one person, or no one political party, has all the answers. That's why the debate in Congress on America's energy plan for the 21st Century is so important. And, part of our obligation is to listen to our constituents and educate all Americans about the reality of our energy situation, and what it will actually take to improve it.

Mr. Chairman, the situation is not as 'cut and dry' as some people on both sides of the issue would like to make it. We cannot simply throw caution to the wind and build pipelines all over the place, and drill for oil or gas anywhere the oil companies want. Neither can we simply oppose an energy plan because we are pure environmentalists. The reality is we are a nation of homeowners, commuters and computer users—we consume energy in practically everything we do. That's why I am working to

provide the necessary balance to our energy plan that will help us better manage our energy production and consumption. There's no way to escape it—we need a strategy on energy, and that's exactly what we are working on. At the same time, we can ill-afford to give up on our historic obligation to our children to protect our nation's air, water, wildlife and open spaces.

We can, and will, do both.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I support H.R. 4 and urge my colleagues to do the same.

SECURING AMERICA'S FUTURE ENERGY ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4) to enhance energy conservation, research and development and to provide for security and diversity in the energy supply for the American people, and for other purposes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to this bill. This bill does not enhance our security: it endangers it. It does not protect our environment: it threatens it.

Increasing global warming does not enhance our security. Increasing our reliance on nuclear power plants and creating more nuclear waste does not enhance our security. Making only token changes in fuel economy standards does not enhance our security.

This bill does not enhance our security. Instead it jeopardizes wilderness, ignores consumers, and rewards the fossil fuel industry at the public expense.

This bill subsidizes the oil industry and gives billions in tax breaks to oil producers in an age of record-breaking profits.

In contrast, it does nothing for California consumers and taxpayers who have paid billions in unjust and unjustified energy costs.

Instead of promoting cost-based rates and badly needed refunds, it increases tax breaks and handouts for the oil, coal, and nuclear industries.

When Minority Leader DICK GEPHARDT and other members of Congress came to my district of Oakland, California, they saw the faces of this crisis. They heard from small business owners who face potential bankruptcy. They heard from persons with disabilities for whom blackouts are nightmares and rising bills are an impossible expense. They heard from school administrators who have been forced to divert money from much needed textbooks, teacher salaries, and instructional supplies to paying energy costs. They heard from the people of California who have been paying the price in this crisis for the last year.

Electricity cannot be treated as any other commodity. We cannot force Americans to choose between paying their utility bills and their grocery bills. Between electricity and rent. Between power and prescriptions. Those choices are simply unacceptable.

Nor can we choose to destroy irreplaceable wilderness for short-term gain. There are simply places on earth that are too fragile, too vulnerable, and too special to drill for oil. The

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one of those places.

I strongly oppose this bill and I urge you to protect America's wilderness and to protect America's consumers and vote against this bill.

SECURING AMERICA'S FUTURE ENERGY ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4) to enhance energy conservation, research and development and to provide for security and diversity in the energy supply for the American people, and for other purposes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Chairman, much like the Nation, the U.S. territories are headed down a dangerous path. Our energy demands are outpacing supply, resulting in blackouts, high fuel prices, and increasing dependence on foreign energy sources.

These problems will only grow worse as electricity consumption continues to grow. Although we are hard pressed to pass legislation to address these issues, we must be mindful of the impact unbalanced legislation will have on our economy and our overall quality of life. We must pass legislation that offers a balance environmentally, socially, economically, and cognizant of national security and energy objectives.

Developing a sound national energy policy presents a compelling challenge. It requires balancing policies to encourage energy conservation, efficiency, and supply. H.R. 4, the Securing America's Future Energy (SAFE) Act fails to create this balance.

H.R. 4 fails to include a provision to explore the possibility of Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) as a renewable energy source. It is our responsibility to explore every possible source of renewable energy available and OTEC is a viable option. OTEC can help meet future energy needs for the nation, and it may also be the most viable alternative for the U.S. insular areas.

Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) is an energy technology that converts solar radiation to electric power. OTEC systems use the ocean's natural thermal gradient—the fact that the ocean's layers of water have different temperatures—to drive a power producing cycle. As long as the temperatures between the warm surface and the cold deep water differs about 20 degrees Celsius, an OTEC system can produce a significant amount of power. The oceans are thus a vast renewable resource, with the potential to help produce billions of watts of power.

The economics of energy production today have delayed the financing of a permanent, continuously operating OTEC plant. However, OTEC is very promising as an alternative energy resource for tropical island communities that rely heavily on imported fuel.

OTEC plants in tropical island communities could provide islanders with much needed power, as well as desalinated water and a variety of mariculture products. Because most insular areas are dependent on the importation